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no positive conclusion with regard to it, but contents himself by saying that if Napoleon was not an epileptic in the ordinary sense of that word, he certainly belonged to a family of "neuropathetics."

Closely allied with this nervous sensibility and this epileptic temperament, and largely accounted for by them, was the weak moral sense. Napoleon's psychical nature was so absorbed, so dominated by his intelligence, that little room was left for anything else. The author quotes with approval Lombroso's comparison of Napoleon with Cæsar, Mohammed, and other conquerors, as epileptic geniuses. When the epileptic tendency displays itself in the psychical field mental exuberances are more than likely to appear. "With a constitution of that kind not a few men of talent represent the unbalanced, the abnormal, the delinquent among geniuses."

JOHN H. CONEY.

Lord John Russell. By STUART J. REID. [The Prime Ministers of Queen Victoria.] (New York: Harper and Brothers. 1895. Pp. xvi, 381.)

SEVERAL years ago Spencer Walpole published a two-volume octavo biography of Earl Russell, or Lord John Russell, as he is known to history by his own preference. It received much praise and has since been regarded as the authority. Mr. Reid had no desire to supersede this with his monograph; evidently his aim was to reduce to the form of a brief and popular narrative the most accessible material and some important recollections respecting Russell. Lord John's political career does not readily lend itself to short and picturesque biography. Sydney Smith might well have said of his friend "Lord John Reformer," as he did of Melbourne, "I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence." Russell also fulfilled Goethe's condition of greatness: he was devoted to one idea. But this was not all; with almost equal honesty and diligence he was also devoted to many other ideas, throughout a period of over half a century. When we thought of his part in the long contest over the change from rotten boroughs to a rational system of parliamentary representation, in the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, in bringing about Catholic Emancipation, in repealing the miserable Corn Laws and introducing the grand policy of Free Trade, in helping Ireland to more freedom and keeping her from starvation, in guiding the foreign policy during the war in the Crimea, in helping Italy to become a nation, and in trying to hold England to a just course of neutrality during our own Civil War, — when we thought of merely these questions, we did not expect to find that Mr. Reid had given more than a synopsis of historical events and biographical incidents. Instead of doing only this, he has written a vivacious and charming biography which assigns Lord John his proper place in history. The success is extraordinary. It is not often that small biographies of great statesmen add much to the knowledge of the reader or to the reputation of the hero. Mr. Reid has furnished an exception.

Russell wrote of himself shortly before his death: "I have committed

many errors, some of them very gross blunders. But the generous people of England are always forbearing and forgiving to those statesmen who have the good of their country at heart." Mr. Reid is in no sense a hero-worshipper, but he has taken more pains to describe Lord John's successes and great traits than to note his failings and less praiseworthy characteristics, although he has a keen eye for Palmerston's Jingoism and for his impetuous disregard for the instructions of his superiors. While it would be ungracious to emphasize the point, it is to be regretted that more has not been told about Russell's life as a partisan Whig, and how he personally accepted victory and defeat. A philosophical American statesman once said, "The faults of great men fall out in history." This is much truer than it ought to be. Every political biography that pretends to be a study of character should disprove this remark quite as much as it should that familiar sentence of Mark Antony about "the evil that men do." Biographers will never receive the respect and confidence which is given to impartial historians until they make it their business to tell the whole truth and think less of eulogy.

Americans will naturally turn first to the chapter covering the period of our Civil War, when Earl Russell, as he had lately become, held the seals of the Foreign Office. This is the least satisfactory part of the book. The printing of a valuable six-page memorandum, about how the law officers failed to act in time to prevent the sailing of the *Alabama*, by the late Lord Selborne, who was then Solicitor-General, saves it from being next to worthless. Not a word is said about England's hurried recognition of the Confederacy as a belligerent in the spring of 1861, before the new American Minister could reach London. Nor does he tell how Lord John was driven back by Seward from his first step toward mediation, nor how, finally, the development of our antislavery policy created such strong English sympathy that he ceased to encourage Mason's hopes or even to listen to Napoleon's schemes. Evidently Mr. Reid has not given much attention to the relations between Great Britain and the United States at this time. Here are some surprising statements: "Hostilities had broken out between the North and the South in the previous July, and the opinion of England was sharply divided on the merits of the struggle. The bone of contention, to put the matter concisely, was the refusal of South Carolina and ten other States to submit to the authority of the Central Government of the Union. It was an old quarrel which had existed from the foundation of the American Commonwealth, for the individual States of the Union had always been jealous of any infringement of the right of self-government; but slavery was now the ostensible root of bitterness, and matters were complicated by radical divergences on the subject of tariffs" (p. 310). Nevertheless Mr. Reid has written a biography which shows that he is a scholar and a literary man of uncommon qualities. The historian Lecky has furnished several very interesting pages of his own recollections of Lord John as he knew him in private life after 1866.

FREDERIC BANCROFT.